

Register result

The following action has been taken by a Federal agency. It has already been summarized in CONSUMER REGISTER as a proposal.

• **Food and Drug Administration (FDA)** is banning beverage containers made from acrylonitrile copolymers (a kind of plastic) because it said the chemical migrated into the Coca-Cola and fruit juices that were bottled in the containers. The ban, originally scheduled to go into effect March 11, was held up in the courts (new effective date is Dec. 22). Further studies on the safety of the chemical in other kinds of containers are continuing. Details—*Federal Register*: Sept. 23, page 48528; March 11, page 14095. CONSUMER REGISTER: April 1 and April 15.

Overbooking

Nov. 7 is deadline for comments on **Civil Aeronautics Board's (CAB)** proposed rules to reduce deliberate overbooking and oversales of airplane seats to the "smallest practicable number."

The proposal increases compensation to "bumped" passengers (those holding confirmed reservations on oversold flights) by requiring that bumped passengers be paid in full for airline tickets to their destination or first stop-over (with a minimum of \$25, maximum of \$200). In cases where airlines cannot provide alternate transportation within 2 hours of originally scheduled arrival time, passengers would receive double the amount of the ticket (minimum of \$50, maximum of \$400). The rule also broadens the eligibility of compensation.

Under the proposal, airlines would be required to ask for volunteers for compensated bumping before bumping unwilling passengers. If not enough passengers volunteer, CAB will allow the airlines to follow an approved non-discriminatory priority bumping procedure. CAB is particularly interested in receiving comments on such procedures.

The proposal does not outlaw deliberate overbooking, but CAB did reserve the right to do so in the future. CAB is also encouraging airlines to develop alternate plans to eliminate intentional overbooking. However, such plans would have to get CAB approval.

CAB began to study the overbooking problem in April 1976, and at that time asked for comments on specific questions on the matter. Comments were filed by 22 airlines and other government and public interest groups—including the **Office of Consumer Affairs (OCA)**. CAB received over 200 comments from individual consumers.

Details—*Federal Register*: Sept. 23, page 48577; April 19, 1976, page 16578. CONSUMER REGISTER: May 1, 1976. RATE REGISTER: March 1. Send comments to Docket 29139, Docket Section, Civil Aeronautics Board, Washington, DC 20428. For more information write or call Robert Kneisley at above address; telephone 202-673-5442.

Washing machines and water heaters

Federal Energy Administration (FEA)—now **Energy Dept.**—has prescribed final test procedures for measuring the energy efficiency of clothes washers and water heaters. The testing is intended to provide information on estimated annual operating costs and energy consumption of these appliances and to help consumers decide on the kind of appliance to buy.

In addition to clothes washers and water heaters, FEA has prescribed procedures for room air conditioners, dishwashers, clothes dryers, TV sets, electric refrigerators, electric refrigerator-freezers and electric freezers.

FEA received comments from industry and consumers, most of which were technical in nature. However, some comments were concerned with what would appear on the

appliance labels. These comments have been sent to the **Federal Trade Commission (FTC)** because that agency has jurisdiction over labeling rules.

Details—*Federal Register*: Sept. 28, page 49803; Oct. 4, page 54110.

Hazardous products

Oct. 31 is deadline for comments on **Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC)** proposal to clarify reporting provisions under a section of the Consumer Product Safety Act. The Act requires that every manufacturer (including importer), distributor or retailer of consumer products who obtains information which reasonably shows that a product contains a defect that could cause a substantial product hazard must immediately notify CPSC, unless the manufacturer has actual knowledge that CPSC knows the problem exists. Violation of consumer product safety rules or other CPSC rules may be punishable by civil or criminal penalties.

Details—*Federal Register*: Sept. 16, page 46719. Send comments to Secretary, Consumer Product Safety Commission, Washington, DC 20207. For more information write or call Eric L. Stone at above address; telephone 301-492-6608.

Bumpers

Oct. 31 is deadline for comments on proposed rules by **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)** to permit a limited amount of damage to car bumper components on cars manufactured after Sept. 1, 1979. Under current rules, "filler panels" and "stone shields" (the generally flexible materials that conceal and protect bumper shock absorbing devices and structures which connect the bumper to the chassis frame) may not become damaged as a result of low speed crashes. Petitions from General Motors, Chrysler and American Motors contend that it would be very expensive to make filler panels and stone shields damage free, and that there would be no commensurate benefits for consumers.

NHTSA has previously ruled that these bumper components may sustain unlimited damage in low speed crashes on cars made from Sept. 1, 1978 until Sept. 1, 1979, and this proposed rule has the effect of extending that ruling to cars made after Sept. 1, 1979—with one exception. Proposed rule contains 2 alternatives: (1) that filler panels and stone shields may receive unlimited damage, and (2) that permanent damage to these components may not exceed deviations of more than 3/4 of an inch from original contours.

Details—*Federal Register*: Sept. 29, page 51632; May 12, page 24056; March 4, 1976, page 9346. CONSUMER REGISTER: June 15, March 15, 1976; Feb 1 and Feb. 15, 1975. Comments should be sent to Room 5108 Nassif Bldg., 400 7th St., SW, Washington, DC 20590. For further information contact Tim Hoyt, Office of Crashworthiness, 400 7th St., SW, Washington, DC 20590; telephone 202-426-2264.

School lunches

Oct. 25 is deadline for comments on Agriculture Dept.'s proposed amendments covering the nutritional requirements of the National School Lunch Program. The major purposes of the proposed changes are to help schools meet more adequately the nutritional needs of children of varying ages and to reduce food waste. The regulations are designed to provide children with about one-third the Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA) for various nutrients (except calories). The proposal also promotes more flexibility in menu planning.

Proposed regulations:

- Define minimum portions of food servings for school children divided into 5 age groups.
- Require that lunches for one-through 5-year-olds be served at 2 sittings, which together meet lunch pattern requirements. (Agriculture feels this will better meet the eating habits of younger children.)
- Allow bread alternates to be expanded to include enriched or whole-grain rice, macaroni, noodles and other pasta products.
- Allow eggs, cooked beans or peas, and peanut butter to be used with one another in equal quantities to meet the total meat or meat alternate requirement, or to be combined with meat, poultry, fish or cheese to meet total meat or meat alternate requirement.
- Allow children 12 years and older to request smaller servings to reduce waste.
- Require that unflavored fluid lowfat milk, skim milk or buttermilk be available to students in addition to whole milk or any flavored milk.
- Recommend that schools serve foods containing iron each day, a vitamin A vegetable or fruit at least twice a week, a vitamin C vegetable or fruit several times a week, and that they keep fat, sugar and salt at moderate levels.
- Require that schools involve students in activities such as menu planning and improving eating environment. The regulations also encourage the schools to teach students good nutrition.

Agriculture would like to receive comments from a wide variety of interested persons including students, parents, teachers and public interest groups. Agriculture will then issue interim regulations based on the comments it receives. Schools will be permitted to field-test the new lunch patterns under the interim regulations, and Agriculture will continue to accept and consider public comments on meal patterns during this period.

Agriculture is especially interested in comments on (1) determining the appropriate meal pattern in schools with mixed age groupings; (2) requiring that second helpings be made available to students; (3) providing lunch pattern in 2 separate meal servings to the youngest group of children; and (4) the feasibility of the "nutrient standard approach" to menu planning. (Menus are planned to meet a predetermined nutrient level instead of a food pattern of specific types and quantities of food.)

Details—*Federal Register*: Sept. 9, page 45328. Send comments to William G. Boling, Child Nutrition Programs, Food and Nutrition Service, Agriculture Dept., Washington, DC 20250; telephone 202-447-8130.

Child nutrition programs—hearings

Agriculture Dept. will hold public hearings on all child nutrition programs, including new meal patterns for school lunches [See *CONSUMER REGISTER*, above], school breakfast program, nutrition education, and financial assistance. Hearings will begin Oct. 25 in Chicago, New York, Denver, Boston, Atlanta, San Francisco, Seattle and Dallas. For information on exact dates and locations of hearings see *Federal Register* listed under "Details" below or call Stan Garnett; telephone 202-447-9065.

Details—*Federal Register*: Sept. 23, page 48360.

College Work-Study Program

Nov. 14 is deadline for comments on Office of Education's (OE) proposed rule changes for students participating in the College Work-Study Program. The College Work-Study Program, authorized by the Higher Education Act of 1965, provides grants for schools and colleges which, in turn, find jobs for needy students. Employment may be on campus or in off-campus locations with a nonprofit organization such as a day care center or hospital. Eighty percent of the student's wages are paid with Federal funds and employers make up the rest.

Proposed rules would make several major changes in the operation of the program. For one thing, they would simplify and shorten the application procedure for participating colleges and schools.

Another change in the regulations would affect a student who works a second job along with the work-study assignment. If the income from the second job in combination with a student's other resources totals more than \$200 over his or her needs for college, the institution may either reduce the assistance or count the extra earnings as part of next year's program resources. When that \$200 limit is reached, the institution may continue to employ the student in the work-study job, but the school must pay the total cost of his or her employment without the Federal share.

The new regulations also state that a student studying abroad in a program connected with his or her "home" institution may not pay travel costs or higher tuition fees with funds received from any of the campus-based financial aid programs or from OE's Basic Educational Opportunity Grant program.

In addition to the College Work-Study Program, the regulations deal with the new Job Location and Development program. This program, authorized by the Education Amendments of 1976, will help colleges establish or expand programs to locate or develop jobs for students. Institutions will be able to use 10% of their College Work-Study funds, up to a limit of \$15,000, for this purpose.

Details—*Federal Register*: Sept. 28, page 49904. Send comments to Bureau of Student Financial Assistance, Office of Education, Room 4004, ROB-No. 3, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20202. For further information call or write Norman B. Brooks at the above address; telephone 202-245-9717.

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consumer comment

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